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SUBJECT: "SIGNALS" ON US-LIBYAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: EVIDENCE HAS BEEN ACCUMULATING OVER PAST FOUR OR FIVE DAYS THAT RCC IS ENGAGED IN DEBATING FUNDA-MENTAL FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS INVOLVING FUTURE OF RELATION .. SHIP BETWEEN LARG AND US IN PARTICULAR. ONE OF CONTENDING FACTIONS REPORTEDLY IS ARGUING STRONGLY THAT USG IS "HOPELESS CASE", A "LOST CAUSE" THAT SHOULD BE WRITTEN OFF. ADVOCATES OF TERMINATING RELATIONSHIP WITH USG POINT TO OVERALL US POSITION ON ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE AND CONTEND THAT USG ON BILATERAL BASIS WITH LIBYA HAS DONE LITTLE IF ANYTHING TO BUILD ON HOPEFUL ATMOSPHERE CREATED BY WHEELUS WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT. ADVOCATES CHARGE USG HAS ONLY APPEARED TAKE OCCASIONAL NEUTRAL STAND IN ARAB ISRAEL DISPUTE AND INSIST IT CANNOT RPT NOT BE COUNTED. UPON. THEY RECOGNIZE THERE ARE INDIVIDUAL PRIVATE AMERICANS WHO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE ARAB POSITION (EVEN WHILE NOT AGREEING WITH IT COMPLETELY), BUT DISCOUNT THESE INDIVIDUALS AS BEING COMPLETELY WITHOUT INFLUENCE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. OTHER GROUPINGS OF VARYING PERSUASIONS WITHIN RCC AND LARG REPORTEDLY ARE ARGUING AGAINST MAKING ANY WIDE RANGING AND PERMANENT DECISION RE FUTURE TOTAL RELATIONSHIP WITH UNITED STATES IN HASTE AND ON BASIS LIMITED EVIDENCE SO FAR AVAILABLE OF REAL US INTENTIONS TOWARD LARG.

2. EVIDENCE OF DEBATE FALLS INTO FOUR GENERAL ACCUMULATIONS: FIRST. UNDERSECRETARY FOREIGN MINISTRY MANSUUR KIKHYA TOLD GEORGE WASHINGTON LAW PROFESSOR AND MRS. W. T. MALLISON APRIL 11

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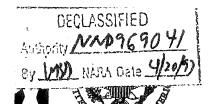
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THAT (A) LARG IN PROCESS MAKING BASIC DECISION RE FUTURE RELA. TIONSHIP US (B) MANY IN RCC ARE ARGUING STRONGLY US SHOULD BE WRITTEN OFF COMPLETELY, (C) THAT HE AND SOME OF HIS PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES IN FOREIGN MINISTRY (INCLUDING MINISTER BWAYSIIR) DO NOT RPT NOT SHARE HOPELESS CACE ANALYSIS BELIEVING US TRADITION OF JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY CAN STILL BE APPEALED TO AND ENERGIZED IN FAVOR ARABS, AND (D) THAT ATTEMPTS OF FOREIGN MINISTRY STAFF TO CONVINCE RCC THAT LARG CAN STILL WORK WITH US ARE UP-HILL LAST DITCH EFFORTS WHOSE SUCCESS IS THOROUGHLY UNCERTAIN SECOND CAS HAS BEEN PICKING UP INDICATIONS THAT RCC IN PROCESS OF MAKING SERIES MAJOR DECISIONS PRINCIPALLY IN FOREIGN POLICY FIELD, THAT DECISION-MAKING PROCESS HAS PRODUCED SERIOUS DISAGREEMENTS AMONG COUNCIL MEMBERS WHICH HAVE LED TO BROAD SPLITS AMONG VARIOUS RCC MEMBERS AND THAT ONCE MADE, DECISIONS MAY PRODUCE CABINET RE-SHUFFLE WHICH WILL REPLACE BWAYSIIR AS FOREIGN MINISTER. THIRD. ACTING LARAF COMMANDER PRESSED EMBOFF APRIL 11 FOR DEFINITIVE INDICATION US INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS LARAF. SEE TRIPOLI 723. FOURTH, FORMER PRIME MINISTER MAHMUUD MAGHRABI (WHO FORMER STUDENT MALLISON) SOUGHT OUT PRO-FESSOR AND MRS. MALLISON EVENING APRIL 12 FOR THREE HOUR SESSION. MAGHRABI REPORTED HE HAS BECOME IN PAST TWO-THREE MONTHS CLOSE PERSONAL ADVISOR AND CONFIDANT TO PRIME MINISTER AND RCC PRESIDENT QADHAAFI . HE STATED HIS IMPACT ON RCC AND ON LARG POLICY IS FAR GREATER NOW THAN IT EVER WAS WHILE HE WAS NOMINALLY PRIME MINISTER. HE NOTED HE HAD ACCOMPANIED QADHAAFI THROUGHOUT RECENT CYRENAICAN SPEAKING TOUR, HAD PROVIDED MANY OF SPEECH IDEAS. AND HAD SAT ON PLATFORM NEXT TO GADHAAFI DURING MAJOR POLICY SPEECHES AT TOBRUK, DERNA AND BAIDA. DURING COURSE LONG CON-VERSATION, MAGHRABI ASSERTED USG WAS "LOST CAUSE" AND THAT US AS NATION COULD NOT BE COUNTED UPON . HE COMMENTED HE WAS PRESSING SAME ANTI-US ARGUMENTS ON QADHAAFI AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY. MAGHRABI TOLD MAILLISONS HE WOULD PREFER GO TO FRONT AND JOIN COMMANDOS, BUT THAT QADHAAFI HAD INSISTED HE WAS MORE NEEDED AND USEFUL IN LIBYAS HE CONCLUDED HE WOULD THEREFORE REMAIN HERE AS LONG AS QADHAAFI WANTED HIM DESPITE HIS OWN PERSONAL PREFERENCES.

3. POSSIBILITY OF COURSE EXISTS LARG IS CONSCIOUSLY USING MALLISE TO FEED INFORMATION INTO USG SINCE MALLISON HAS MADE NO SECRET OF HIS VISITS TO EMBASSY TO SEE AMBASSADOR AND OTHER EMBOFFS. POSSIBILITY OF INTENTIONAL INFORMATION OPERATION, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT APPEAR TO VITIATE VALIDITY OF INFORMATION BEING PASSED ALONG, RE CURRENT BASIC POLICY REVIEW. INDEED, LARG MAY BE

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"SIGNALING" IN BROADEST POSSIBLE STROKES TO MAKE CERTAIN WE GET MESSAGE THAT RCC IS DEBATING FUNDAMENTAL POLICY CHOICE.

4. MAGHRABI HAS ARRANGED FOR MALLISON TO SEE QADHAAFI APRIL 13.
HE APPARENTLY IMPLIED SESSION MIGHT WELL BE LONG ONE.
EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT DEBRIEF MALLISON ON HIS MEETING WITH
QADHAAFI. HOWEVER, MALLISON HAS EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE RELUCTANCE
SEE EMBOFF AFTER SEEING PRIMIN AND SUGGESTED INSTEAD HE WOULD
GET IN TOUCH WITH ASST SECY NEWSOM UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON
APRIL 15.

5. MY COMMENTS WILL FOLLOW APRIL 14.

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